

# UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

City of Riverside, California

DRAFT

**REVISED APRIL 17, 2006**

Prepared by:

**THE ARROYO GROUP**

***–NOTE: PAGE NUMBERS ARE NOT ACCURATE IN THIS DRAFT–***

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
--------------------------------	----------

**SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

• University Neighborhood Planning Area .....	6
• What is a Neighborhood Plan? .....	6
• Relationship of the Neighborhood Plan to the Riverside General Plan 2025 .....	6
• How is the University Neighborhood Plan Organized? .....	8
• History of the University Neighborhood.....	8
• Relationship of the University Neighborhood to Other Plans.....	9

**SECTION 2: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & NEIGHBORHOOD VISION**

• Overview .....	12
• What Residents Like About Their University Neighborhood.....	12
• What Residents Would Most Like to Change in Their University Neighborhood .....	12
• A Vision for the Future of the University Neighborhood .....	13

**SECTION 3: URBAN DESIGN**

• Urban Design Framework and the Neighborhood Vision .....	15
• Citywide Urban Design Framework.....	15
• University Neighborhood Urban Design Framework .....	16

**SECTION 4: PRIVATE REALM LAND USES**

• Land Use and the Neighborhood Vision .....	18
• Relationship to the General Plan 2025.....	18
• Land Use Challenges and Opportunities .....	18
• Land Use Policies and Tools .....	19

**SECTION 5: CIRCULATION & COMMUNITY MOBILITY**

• Circulation and Mobility and the Neighborhood Vision .....	24
• Relationship to General Plan 2025.....	24
• Circulation and Community Mobility Challenges and Opportunities .....	24
• Circulation and Community Mobility Policies and Tools .....	25

**SECTION 6: THE PUBLIC REALM**

• What is the Public Realm? .....	30
• Public Realm and the Neighborhood Vision.....	30
• Relationship to General Plan 2025.....	30
• Public Realm Challenges and Opportunities.....	31
• Public Realm Policies and Tools.....	32

SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION

- Overview .....36
- Creation of a City-University  
Neighborhood-UCR Partnership for Planning  
Partnership.....36

FIGURES *NOTE: FIGURES ARE SEPARATE FILES FOR THE DRAFT*

- 1. University Neighborhood Planning Area ..... 7
- 2. Citywide Urban Design Framework..... 18
- 3. University Neighborhood Urban Design Framework .....21
- 4. Land Use.....27
- 5. Circulation and Mobility .....36
- 6. Watkins Drive Parkway Concept (section).....37
- 7. Public Realm .....45

APPENDICES *NOTE: APPENDICES 2 AND 3 ARE NOT INCLUDED AS PART OF THIS DRAFT BUT ARE AVAILABLE SEPARATELY*

- 1. Bibliography of Best Planning Practices
- 2. University Neighborhood Meeting #1 Summary Report
- 3. University Neighborhood Meeting #2 Summary Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University Neighborhood Plan is intended to improve the quality of life in the University Neighborhood.

The University Neighborhood Plan encompasses single and multiple family residential areas and retail areas and the University of California at Riverside. The Plan is based upon Objectives and Policies contained in the Riverside General Plan 2025, inputs from residents and property owners provided at four community meetings, inputs from the University of California at Riverside and research regarding relevant best practices.

**Section 1: INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND** describes the components of the Plan, the history of the University Neighborhood and how the Plan relates to other plans of the City and County.

**Section 2: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & NEIGHBORHOOD VISION** describes what residents like most and would most like to change about their University Neighborhood. These likes and desires for change were incorporated into a Vision for the future to which the University Neighborhood aspires. The Vision is as follows.

*The University Neighborhood is a diverse, actively engaged community with residents who live in quiet single-family residences and higher density housing serving both the Neighborhood and the University. Residents take pleasure in views of and access to the beautiful Box Springs Mountains and proximity to the vibrant educational and cultural resources of the University of California at Riverside. The University Neighborhood enjoys convenient and pleasant shopping in retail areas surrounding the campus, which are comfortable and attractive meeting places for the Neighborhood and UCR. The University Neighborhood appreciates its quality public facilities including schools, parks, a community/senior center, attractive streetscapes and well-preserved, natural open spaces. The University Neighborhood enjoys excellent pedestrian and bicycle access to UCR, Bus Rapid Transit access to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace and access to the region via the freeways and Downtown Metrolink Station.*

**Section 3: URBAN DESIGN** describes the unique relationship between the University Neighborhood and its citywide context, as defined in the General Plan, as well as the network of private and public areas that provide a local context for the Neighborhood Vision.

Among the most prominent features of the University Neighborhood's relationship to the Citywide Urban Design Framework are the influence of the University of California at Riverside, the beautiful Box Springs Preserve hills to the east, and the proximity of Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace via University Avenue to the west.

The Urban Design Framework for the University Neighborhood consists of a Private Realm comprised of residential, commercial and mixed-use areas, and a Public Realm comprised of streetscapes, parks and public facilities.

**Section 4: PRIVATE REALM LAND USES** describes how the proposed Land Uses relate to the market and community-driven land uses of the General Plan and local neighborhood preferences.

Three major land use areas are proposed: a predominantly single family area to the east of Watkins Drive, a primarily residential area with a mixture of apartments, condominiums and single family units to the north of Blaine Street and a mixed-use area of commercial and higher density residential to the west of the I 215/SR 60 freeway along University Avenue.

The creation of new two Mixed Use-Village areas are proposed to improve shopping and dining opportunities for the major single family area to the east of Watkins Drive. Mixed Use-Urban is proposed to the west of UCR along University Avenue to create a vibrant environment that is appealing to UCR students and faculty and University Neighborhood residents.

**Section 5: CIRCULATION & COMMUNITY MOBILITY** describes how the proposed Land Uses relate to the citywide components of the General Plan, local neighborhood desires for enhanced mobility and a reduction of parking impacts from non-resident parking in single-family residential areas.

Enhancements are proposed for bicycle paths, hiking trails and public transit as well as an expanded “residents only” parking program.

**Section 6: THE PUBLIC REALM** describes how a network of public streetscapes, parks, public facilities and open spaces in the University Neighborhood can be connected and upgraded to create a more attractive and functional public environment.

Enhancements proposed include upgrading of existing parks, improvement to planned park areas, the addition of local hiking trails and a program to increase public safety through education and defensible space design.

The creation of Watkins Drive Parkway is proposed to provide a multi-modal travel corridor and linear park with opportunities for biking and hiking in a park like environment. Sound buffers for the Metrolink corridor are also proposed.

**Section 7: IMPLEMENTATION** proposes a University Neighborhood Partnership involving the City, the University Neighborhood and UCR. It is recommended that the Partnership continue to coordinate the plans and planning of the City.

All of the Implementation Tools identified to implement the policies of the Neighborhood Plan are summarized in charts, which suggest responsibilities, timing and policy interrelationships for implementing the Neighborhood Plan.

# 1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

## University Neighborhood Planning Area

The University Neighborhood, illustrated in Figure 1, is located in the northeastern portion of the City of Riverside, at the eastern end of University Avenue. The University Neighborhood is bounded by Chicago Avenue to the west, Spruce Street and the City boundary to the north, Le Conte Drive and University Drive to the south, and the City boundary to the east. The Neighborhood is contiguous with three other established City Neighborhoods: Eastside to the west, Hunter Industrial Park to the north, and Canyon Crest to the south.

## What is a Neighborhood Plan?

The City of Riverside General Plan 2025 identifies the City's twenty-eight neighborhoods as the fundamental building blocks of the City, and places a high priority on their protection and enhancement. To accomplish this, the General Plan includes a Neighborhood Plan for each of the neighborhoods outlined in the General Plan Land Use Element. Policy LU-30.8 sets out to amend each of the twenty-six residential Neighborhood Plans with the participation of residents and property owners within the affected area. The Neighborhood Plans are an implementation tool of the General Plan, and are intended to provide more detailed policies, tools and concepts for each neighborhood. The General Plan provides a Citywide Vision with concepts, Objectives and Policies to achieve the vision. The University Neighborhood Plan implements and supplements the Vision, concepts, Objectives and Policies of the General Plan.

## Relationship of the Neighborhood Plan to the Riverside General Plan 2025

The Land Use and Urban Design Element of the Riverside General Plan 2025 defines specific Objectives and Policies for each of the City's twenty-eight neighborhoods. Following are the objectives and policies for the University Neighborhood:

**Objective LU 81:** **Allow for the growth and expansion of the University of California, Riverside while ensuring preservation and enhancement of surrounding residential neighborhoods.**

*Policy 81.1: Coordinate with UCR and neighborhood groups in joint planning efforts, including the joint development and updates of the UCR Long Range Development Plan.*

- Policy 81.2: Protect the character of the existing single-family neighborhoods, seeking to minimize potential “town-gown” conflicts.*
- Policy 81.3: Encourage the reuse and/or revitalization of underutilized commercial areas through appropriately scaled mixed-use development.*
- Policy 81.4: Seek opportunities to develop commercial centers that serve both students and civilian needs.*
- Objective LU-82: Provide a diversity of housing opportunities throughout the University Neighborhood**
- Policy 82.1: Encourage the construction of new rental apartments as well as the retention of existing and future rental stock and the provision of affordable units.*
- Objective LU-83: Ensure coordinated development along University Ave in recognition of the street’s importance as a key route between the University and the Downtown Core, a center for the hospitality industry and a source of commercial services for surrounding residential neighborhoods.**
- Policy 83.1: Update the University Avenue Specific Plan to allow for mixed-use and residential development along the corridor that supports land use designations of the General Plan.*
- Policy 83.2: Encourage the creation of a continuous uniform streetscape along University Ave.*
- Policy 83.3: Encourage student housing and activities along the University Avenue corridor.*
- Objective LU-84: Recognize and preserve existing rural lifestyles within the University Neighborhood by recognizing topographical constraints to conventional urban development.**
- Policy 84.1: Preserve the rural lifestyle in the Mount Vernon Bowl District.*
- Policy 84.2: Encourage Riverside County to carefully review development proposals for open spaces adjacent to the Box Springs Mountains Reserve in order to ensure sensitivity to the natural terrain and compatibility with residential uses in the Mount Vernon Bowl area.*

## How is the University Neighborhood Plan Organized?

The University Neighborhood Plan is organized into seven sections that include a/an:

- **Introduction/Background** section that defines the Planning Area, explains the relationship of the University Neighborhood Plan to the City of Riverside General Plan for 2025, provides a brief history of the University Neighborhood and describes other plans that will or could affect the University Neighborhood;
- **Community Participation and Neighborhood Vision** section that explains the important role of the University Neighborhood in developing the plan and the Neighborhood's Vision for the Planning Area;
- **Urban Design** section that describes the Citywide Urban Design Framework for the University Neighborhood Plan and further articulates a Neighborhood Urban Design Framework;
- **Land Use** section that describes proposed land uses for the University Neighborhood including several refinements to the General Plan Land Uses;
- **Circulation and Community Mobility** proposes several enhancements to the Citywide Circulation Element of the General Plan to achieve the Neighborhood's Vision and to resolve several traffic and parking challenges identified by the Neighborhood;
- **Public Realm** section that describes how the public facilities in the neighborhood can be supplemented and linked through enhanced streetscapes and a new, linear open space;
- **Implementation** section that proposes a new partnership of the City, UCR and the University Community Neighborhood to more effectively coordinate planning and implementation in the future.

## History of the University Neighborhood

The University Neighborhood is a relatively new neighborhood whose development coincides with the growth of the University of California, Riverside. The northeast portion of the Neighborhood consists primarily of single-family residential subdivisions that were constructed in the 1960s. The remainder of the Planning Area is comprised of a mix of apartments, trailer parks and single-family residences developed in a more piecemeal fashion over the same time period.

The University Neighborhood derives its name from its proximity to the University of California, Riverside (UCR), which moved from its initial location at the base of Mt. Rubidoux to the northeastern portion of the City in 1918. From 1918 to 1948, the University of California operated a Citrus Experiment Station



near the Gage Canal, and there were no other University facilities. In 1948, a committee of the State Legislature recommended that a small liberal arts college be constructed near the University of California's Citrus Experiments Station. The development of the University was delayed by the Korean War, and the first core campus buildings were not completed until 1954. Five years later, in 1959, the UC Regents declared UCR a "General Campus," which resulted in planning efforts for a much larger institution.

Since its beginnings, the growth and development of the University of California, Riverside has been intertwined with the surrounding residential areas. In 1964, the first Long Range Development Plan for the campus proposed an enrollment of 10,000 students. Since then the campus has experienced rapid growth and constructed new facilities for the Fine Arts, Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences. The recently completed 2005 Long Range Development Plan projects a student enrollment of 25,000 by the year 2015. This growth will have a significant impact on the surrounding Neighborhoods.

The growth of UCR has caused concern among the neighbors of UCR, many of whom believe that the quality of life they have enjoyed for many years is now being or will be compromised. This response to growth has created a "town-gown" conflict in that residents feel that some of the goals and actions of the University are in conflict with the values of those who live adjacent to campus.

### **Relationship of the University Neighborhood to Other Plans**

In addition to the City of Riverside General Plan 2025, there are several other plans that have concepts or policies that will, or could potentially affect the University Neighborhood.

#### University Avenue Specific Plan

The University Avenue Specific Plan was prepared in 1993 to promote the rejuvenation of the environment along the University Avenue corridor, while establishing a more appropriate mix of land uses and encouraging high-quality development. This plan recognizes that University Avenue provides the primary link between downtown and the UCR campus. The plan proposes strengthening this connection by improving the visual quality of the street with landscaping, an improved pedestrian environment and the promotion of non-automotive transportation modes between UCR and Downtown.

#### Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The recently completed Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) provides for the protection of species and habitats within a 1.25 million acre area that includes fourteen cities and all unincorporated Riverside County land west of the San Jacinto Mountains to the Orange County line. The plan, which conserves 146 plant and animal species and 500,000 acres of habitat, underpins one of the largest conservation efforts ever attempted in the State.

The plan identifies the Box Springs Mountains Reserve at the easterly edge of the University Neighborhood and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park near the southerly edge of the Neighborhood as

two important conservation areas that are connected by a regional wildlife corridor. The preservation of these areas is an important goal for many residents who want to see the protection of flora and fauna that are native to the region.

#### Sycamore Canyon Specific Plan

The Sycamore Canyon Specific Plan was adopted in 1984 to help guide development and preserve open space within the Sycamore Canyon area.

#### University Community Plan Addendum

The University Community Plan Addendum was developed several years ago in parallel with the early stages of the update of the Long-Range Development Plan by UCR. Though not formally adopted, the analyses for the Addendum have partially informed the current preparation of the University Neighborhood Plan. A significant conclusion reached in preparing the Addendum was that there are not sufficient vacant sites immediately around UCR to provide the off-campus housing that is essential for students, faculty, administration and staff as the University dramatically increases its enrollment in the years ahead. Furthermore, it was learned that the University has limited financial resources to provide either housing on or off the campus. The Addendum identified the potential to channel the UCR off-campus housing demand to portions of University Avenue, the Riverside Marketplace and Downtown. This would provide an impetus for further revitalization of these areas; relieve pressure for more housing at the immediate edges of UCR in the University Neighborhood. This revitalization can also create the potential for an expanded range of housing choices for Riverside residents and students, faculty, administration and staff who would like to live near UCR in either historic districts or new areas that both will provide attractive alternatives to the automobile for many daily trips.

#### Downtown Specific Plan

The recently adopted Downtown Specific Plan defines a variety of housing, retail and cultural opportunities for both City of Riverside residents and UCR. The plan calls for the preservation of unique historic neighborhoods and the development of new housing types in sensitive new infill projects and adaptively reused historic structures.

#### Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan

The original Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan, adopted over a decade ago, defined a strategy for the historic preservation and adaptive reuse of this area's historic railroad depots and citrus packing plants. Aided by the City's success in obtaining a federal grant for over 6 million dollars, the blight has been removed, new infrastructure has been constructed and many of the historic structures have been restored and adaptively reused. City residents and UCR students and faculty alike now enjoy the distinctive restaurants, coffee galleries and entertainment venues located in the historic structures of the Marketplace. The Marketplace Specific Plan is currently being updated to accommodate transit-oriented development over the large surface parking lots located adjacent to the Downtown Riverside Metrolink Station.

**Best Practices**

In addition to the planning considerations noted above, research of best practices was conducted to learn from the experience of other communities in planning for the relationships between a University and its surrounding neighborhood. The sources determined to be relevant and which were considered in developing the University Neighborhood Plan are identified in Appendix 1 –Bibliography of Best Planning Practices.

DRAFT

## **2. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD VISION**

### **Overview**

The University Neighborhood Plan was developed with the participation of residents, businesses and property owners in the University Neighborhood. Throughout the planning process residents participated in four Neighborhood meetings, in which they were asked to voice their opinions and offer suggestions for the University Neighborhood Plan.

### **What Residents Like About Their University Neighborhood**

At the first Neighborhood meeting, residents were asked to identify what they most like about their University Neighborhood. The most frequently cited positive features of the University Neighborhood include:

- A family-oriented, residential environment;
- The unique natural hillside environment;
- Convenient neighborhood schools and parks; and
- Friendly neighbors.

### **What Residents Would Like to Change in Their University Neighborhood**

At the first two Neighborhood meetings, residents were also asked to identify what they would like to change in the University Neighborhood. The most common potentials identified for positive change included:

- Protecting single-family neighborhoods from new high-density housing developments that are out of character with the scale and lifestyle of the Neighborhood;
- Preserving existing wildlife areas from destructive activities such as dumping trash and the use of off-road vehicles;
- Upgrading existing commercial areas to provide services and amenities for University Neighborhood residents;
- Increasing code enforcement to improve overall Neighborhood quality and better the relationship between students and residents;

- Removing student, faculty and UCR staff vehicles from residential areas to preserve the character of the single family neighborhood east of Watkins Drive;
- Slowing traffic and improving the visual appearance of streetscapes along the major streets in the Neighborhood; and
- Creating better connections to the educational, cultural and open space resources of the UCR campus.

### **A Vision for the Future of the University Neighborhood**

At the second Neighborhood meeting, residents were asked to talk about important values that might become part of a Vision Statement for the University Neighborhood. Meeting participants offered the following ideas for the Neighborhood Vision.

- “Residents cherish our Neighborhood’s unique location”
- “The University Neighborhood is a diverse community that works hard to keep its high quality of life”
- “The University Neighborhood is a place where one can work, play, walk and learn”
- “The Neighborhood should appreciate UCR and UCR should appreciate the Neighborhood”
- “We cherish our unique location, environmentally, educationally and intellectually”
- “Our community is a livable Neighborhood”
- “The University Neighborhood is working together for the community and the environment”
- “The University Neighborhood is where family, friends and the preservation of our Neighborhood are the focus”

Following is a Vision for the future of the University Neighborhood that reflects the inputs of residents at the Neighborhood meetings held during the preparation of this plan.

*The University Neighborhood is a diverse, actively engaged community with residents who live in quiet single-family residences and higher density housing serving both the Neighborhood and the University. Residents take pleasure in views of and access to the beautiful Box Springs Mountains and proximity to the vibrant educational and cultural resources of the University of California at Riverside. The University Neighborhood enjoys convenient and pleasant shopping in retail areas surrounding the campus, which*

*are comfortable and attractive meeting places for the Neighborhood and UCR. The University Neighborhood appreciates its quality public facilities including schools, parks, a community/senior center, attractive streetscapes and well-preserved, natural open spaces.* The University Neighborhood enjoys excellent pedestrian and bicycle access to UCR, Bus Rapid Transit access to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace and access to the region via the freeways and Downtown Metrolink Station.

DRAFT

### 3. URBAN DESIGN

#### Urban Design Framework and the Neighborhood Vision

The Urban Design Framework for the University Neighborhood defines desirable relationships between the Public Realm of institutional districts, streetscapes, parks and natural spaces and the Private Realm of appropriately located and constituted land use districts for living and shopping.

#### Citywide Urban Design Framework

The Citywide Urban Design Framework for the University Neighborhood Plan is described in Figure 2.

The most relevant features of the Citywide Urban Design Framework for the University Neighborhood Plan include:

- The University of California at Riverside, which is a major district both within the City of Riverside and the University Neighborhood
- Downtown Riverside, which is located only two miles west of the UCR campus and is readily accessible by bicycle and public transit.
- The University Avenue Corridor, which is designated as Mixed Use-Urban and Mixed Use-Village in the General Plan 2025, is proposed to accommodate Bus Rapid Transit connecting UCR with La Sierra University via the “L-Corridor” of University and Magnolia Avenues, which also pass through Downtown
- The Eastside Neighborhood, which extends southward and northward from University Avenue to the west of the University Neighborhood
- The Hunter Industrial Park Neighborhood, which includes employment resources for residents of the neighborhoods as well as technical/educational connections with UCR
- The Riverside Marketplace District, which is located along University Avenue adjacent to the 91 freeway and Downtown Riverside and is both a historic dining/entertainment/retail office districts and a transit oriented district with Urban Village Mixed Use adjacent to the Metrolink Station
- Fairmount Park at the “River’s Side,” which forms the natural edge to the Downtown on the west, and the Box Springs Mountains Reserve, which creates the natural edge to the University Neighborhood on the East.

The Citywide Urban Design Framework also illustrates the convenient public transit access that residents of the University Neighborhood will have to the City's major educational, cultural and historic resources located along the "L-Corridor," which extends through Downtown Riverside along University Avenue and then south along Magnolia Avenue to Riverside Community College, California Baptist University and La Sierra University.

### **University Neighborhood Urban Design Framework**

The Citywide Urban Design Framework provides several of the key features of the Vision for the University Neighborhood previously defined including the natural setting of the Box Springs Mountains and the University Avenue connection to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace, as well as the University of California at Riverside District.

Figure 3: University Neighborhood Urban Design Framework identifies major existing and planned features of the Public and Private realms that interrelate to create the unique character of the University Neighborhood.

The Major Land Use Districts of the Private Realm include the:

- Eastern Single Family Residential District;
- Western Single Family Residential District;
- Western Mixed Densities Residential District;
- University Avenue Mixed Use Corridor encompassing University Village and a portion of the University Avenue Corridor; and
- Mixed Use-Village Districts including the Big Springs Plaza, University Plaza and Iowa Avenue Districts.

The Major Public Realm Components include the:

- University Avenue Streetscape, which provides the environment for the University Neighborhood's connection to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace;
- Watkins Drive Parkway, which creates a new, linear open space for the University Neighborhood and connects the Box Springs Mountains Reserve with Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park
- Major Streetscape Enhancements—to Spruce Street, Blaine Street, Martin Luther King Boulevard, Chicago Avenue, Iowa Avenue and Campus Drive—that create pleasant pathways and reinforce the unique identity of the University Neighborhood



- Freeway (I 215/SR 60) Edges that can be treated to create better acoustic and aesthetic transitions to the University Neighborhood;
- Primary and Secondary Neighborhood/UCR Gateways, which provide public art, graphics, landscape and lighting elements to enhance the environment, provide wayfinding information and reinforce the unique character of the Neighborhood;
- Metrolink Railroad Corridor, which freight and passenger trains will continue to utilize, that should be treated with acoustic and aesthetic improvements to protect and enhance the University Neighborhood.

The nature of the Land Use Districts is further described in the Land Use section that follows. The nature of the Public Realm Components is further described in the Public Realm section that follows.

## **4. LAND USE**

### **Land Use and the Neighborhood Vision**

The Neighborhood Vision for Land Use reflects both inputs from residents at the community meetings discussed in Section 2 and the policies of the General Plan 2025 summarized in Section 1. Thus the Neighborhood Vision embodies the:

- Neighborhood's desire to protect the single family neighborhoods nestled against the Box Springs Mountains Reserve to the east of the existing Watkins Drive and the University's needs for quality, affordable housing for residents and UCR students, faculty and staff;
- Neighborhood's and the University's desire for improved Neighborhood shopping facilities where residents, students, faculty and staff can shop and meet in an appealing environment.

### **Relationship to the General Plan 2025**

The General Plan 2025 encourages the expansion of UCR while ensuring the preservation and enhancement of residential areas within the University Neighborhood. The General Plan also encourages the reuse and/or revitalization of underutilized commercial areas by encouraging appropriately scaled mixed-use developments to serve both residents and UCR students, faculty and staff.

The General Plan recognizes the importance of providing diverse housing opportunities in the University Neighborhood, including new rental apartments, the retention of existing and future rental stock, and affordable housing units. The General Plan stresses the importance of providing quality apartments and multi-family housing within the University Neighborhood, and recommends the development of future new student housing along the University Avenue corridor. Finally, the General Plan encourages the protection of single-family neighborhoods and the minimization of potential town-gown conflicts.

### **Land Use Challenges and Opportunities**

The Challenges and Opportunities to achieving the Land Use Vision for the University Neighborhood include the:

- need for an adequate supply of conveniently located housing for students, faculty and staff, that cannot be entirely provided on the UCR campus, partially due to the varied housing preferences of students, faculty and staff;
- Lack of adequate space for student housing in vacant parcels within the University Neighborhood;
- Student demand for rental units and overcrowding of rental units within the single family areas east of Watkins Drive;

- Current lack of development opportunities for new types of retail areas surrounding UCR, which can be attractive to and shared by University Neighborhood residents, students, faculty and staff; and;
- Economics of revitalizing small, neighborhood shopping areas that have limited capacity for expansion and current tenant mixes that do not optimally serve either residents of the University Neighborhood or UCR students, faculty and staff.

## Land Use Objective

The following Objective was defined based on the Neighborhood Vision and is used to formulate the Policies and Tools:

**LU Objective: Enhance the University Neighborhood's quality of life through protecting single family areas, providing quality, affordable housing and enhancing neighborhood shopping.**

## Land Use Policies and Tools

The following policies and tools are proposed to achieve the Land Use Vision and Objective, and address the Challenges and Opportunities. Figure 4 – Private Realm - Land Use - illustrates many of these policies and tools.

**LU Policy 1: Protect and maintain the single-family residential areas located primarily east of Watkins Drive and the pockets of single-family areas located west of Watkins Drive.**

*LU Tool 1.1: Initiate amendment of Section 19.520 of the Zoning Code to consider allowing the rental of rooms to a maximum of two individuals per dwelling unit, plus members of the family occupying such dwellings, within all Residential zones.*

The existing Single Family areas illustrated in Figure 4 are areas of the Neighborhood which need to be protected. In order to maintain the quiet, family-oriented nature of these areas, it is recommended that the number of renters be limited to two people per dwelling unit plus members of the family occupying such dwellings. Limiting the allowable residential density to two individuals per dwelling unit will help preserve existing single-family areas by preventing overcrowding that creates traffic, excessive on-street parking and noise.

Multi-family residential areas within the Neighborhood are also subject to Zoning Code violations that result in overcrowding of apartment dwellings and subsequent impacts on local traffic and parking. In order to preserve the integrity of existing multi-family and high-

density residential areas, it is recommended that the number of renters be limited to two people per dwelling unit plus members of the family occupying such dwellings. Limiting the allowable residential density to two individuals per dwelling unit will help eliminate current and prevent future overcrowding.

*LU Tool 1.2: Develop and implement the Rental Housing Licensing Program that holds landlords accountable for code enforcement of their properties.*

In areas where code enforcement has been an on-going problem, landlords and property owners should be required to demonstrate that their properties meet existing Zoning Code and Municipal Code regulations, including noise-related regulations. This program would make license renewal contingent upon a proven track record of acceptable Code Compliance. By making landlords more accountable for the condition of their properties, they will likely make their tenants more accountable as well.

**LU Policy 2: Provide quality, affordable rental housing for University Neighborhood residents, students, faculty and staff.**

*LU Tool 2.1: Locate future private student-oriented housing areas where they do not impact existing single-family residential neighborhoods.*

A common “town-gown” problem related to student housing arises when University students, in search of adequate off-campus housing, turn to existing single-family residential areas because it is the best housing they can find. Local houses are popular with students because they can live dorm-style—where two people often share a room—in order to cut the cost of housing. Many town-gown plans have recognized that the way to offset the intrusion of students into single-family areas is to provide private student-oriented housing in appropriately located developments that are close to campus and provide students with a variety of local amenities and services, including public transportation.

The most appropriate areas for these developments are within High-Density Residential and Mixed-Use Urban land use designations in the University Neighborhood and along University Avenue, within Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace, as shown in Figures 3 and 4. In addition to being affordable for students, the apartments should include or be located near amenities such as cafes, gyms, music stores, performance venues, coffee houses, clothing stores and other retail stores that are popular with residents as well as University students.

*LU Tool 2.2: Implement a Neighborhood Livability Program and aggressive code enforcement action to upgrade high-density residential zones designated in the General Plan 2025.*

Within the University Neighborhood, there are areas near campus that are designated as high-density residential. These areas are comprised almost entirely of student apartments, due to their proximity to campus. Many of these apartments were built in the 1970s and 1980s, and are now starting to show signs of age and neglect. In order to effectively plan for future growth and the expansion of UCR, this aging stock of local apartments must be upgraded. The City's Neighborhood Livability Program, along with aggressive code enforcement action, can be implemented to improve problem properties.

*LU Tool 2.3: Explore opportunities to encourage property owners to upgrade older or neglected facilities.*

In addition to aggressive code enforcement, there may be other solutions or assistance programs that could be developed to encourage upgrading of rental properties by the owners or tenants.

*LU Tool 2.4: Encourage the development of new housing at the existing and proposed Mixed-Use Districts within the University Neighborhood.*

With the adoption of new mixed-use districts, as outlined in Land Use Policy 1, there will be new opportunities to construct a limited amount of multi-family and student, faculty and staff housing near the University. The City and UCR, with inputs from the University Neighborhood, should develop detailed conceptual plans for each of the Mixed Use Centers illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 and initiate a developer recruitment plan to construct these centers.

**LU Policy 3: Implement Mixed-use Zoning at existing commercial centers to increase the level of neighborhood shopping and pedestrian amenities, upgrade the tenant mixes and encourage private sector investment.**

*LU Tool 3.1: Initiate a General Plan Amendment to consider changing the land use designation for Big Springs Plaza from Commercial to Mixed-Use Village.*

Big Springs Plaza, shown in Figure 4, is a small commercial development situated on the corner of Watkins Drive and Big Springs Road, and is currently designated as Commercial (C). In addition to being within walking distance of the UCR campus and surrounding residential areas, the plaza is also near Islander Park and the Box Springs Mountains Reserve. Because of its proximity to existing single-family areas and existing apartments, the Plaza is an ideal location to construct a Mixed-Use Village (MU-V) environment with new retail, residential and local serving office at an appropriate density.

The General Plan defines a Mixed-Use Village as having medium to high-density residential development with retail, office and service use primarily at the street level to facilitate a

pedestrian environment. The designation is intended to encourage new housing opportunities, such as live/work units and residential over retail, that are adjacent to commercial services. The maximum allowable FAR is 2.5, with a residential component of thirty dwelling units per acre.

*LU Tool 3.2: Initiate a General Plan Amendment to consider changing the land use designation for the University Plaza from Mixed Use-Urban to Mixed Use-Village.*

The University Plaza, shown in Figure 4, is a commercial center located at the corner of Watkins Drive and Blaine Street, directly north of the UCR campus. The center is currently designated Mixed-Use Urban (MU-U), a high-intensity land use designation that allows for high-density residential development with commercial, office, institutional and business uses emphasizing retail, entertainment and student-oriented activities. The maximum FAR for Mixed-Use Urban areas is 4.0, with a residential component of 40 dwelling units per acre and a maximum building height of 60'.

The level of density allowed within the University Plaza is incompatible with surrounding single-family residential areas to the north and to the east. In order to provide a better transition, it is recommended that the University Plaza be designated as Mixed Use-Village. The lower densities allowed by this land use designation will lessen potential impacts on the nearby single-family areas.

*LU Tool 3.3: Initiate a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation for the Kmart/Stater Brothers Plaza from Commercial to Mixed-Use Village.*

The Kmart/Stater Brothers Plaza, shown in Figure 4, is a large commercial area located at the corner of Iowa Avenue and Blaine Street, currently designated Commercial (C). In addition to Kmart and Stater Brothers, the plaza includes several other retailers and services. The Plaza is located near lower density single family areas as well as higher density apartments. Due to its proximity to higher density housing, it is recommended that the land use designation for Kmart/Stater Brothers Plaza be changed to allow for a Mixed-Use Village.

**LU Policy 4: Upgrade University Avenue as a location for community and University related housing and commercial areas as well as enhancing University Neighborhood's accessibility to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace.**

*LU Tool 4.1: Initiate an amendment to the University Avenue Specific Plan to allow for higher-density, mixed-use developments consistent with the General Plan 2025 with additional design guidelines and public improvements.*

The University Avenue corridor, shown in Figure 4, is an appropriate location for higher density mixed-use developments and student, faculty, staff and community housing. The maximum FAR for this area should remain at 4.0, while the residential component of any future development should also be forty units per acre. However, higher densities are permissible for projects that have the potential to serve as transit-oriented developments. While the FAR for transit-oriented projects will remain at 4.0, a residential density of 60 dwelling units per acre is allowed. Qualifying projects must be constructed within one-half mile of a transit stop, which includes Bus Rapid Transit stops along University Avenue.

## **5. CIRCULATION AND COMMUNITY MOBILITY**

### **Circulation and Mobility and the Neighborhood Vision**

The Neighborhood Vision for Circulation reflects both inputs from residents at the community meetings discussed in Section 2 and the policies of the General Plan 2025 summarized in Section 1. Thus the Neighborhood Vision embodies the Neighborhood's desires for:

- Protection of the single family neighborhoods from the negative impacts of on-street parking by students who live in rented single family homes;
- Slower automobile travel speeds in the Neighborhood;
- Better pedestrian and bicycle connections to UCR;
- Public transit and bicycle access to Downtown and the Riverside Marketplace;
- Better hiking trail access to the adjacent foothills and mountains; and
- Restriction of off-road vehicle access to the natural areas at the easterly edges of the University Neighborhood.

### **Relationship to General Plan 2025**

The Circulation and Community Chapter of the General Plan 2025 acknowledges that Riverside's traffic and congestion woes will need to be resolved by developing a comprehensive strategy that includes focusing development near existing transportation corridors, ensuring land uses are supported by an efficient local roadway network, embracing innovative solutions to freeway congestion, and supporting alternative modes of transportation. The General Plan 2025 proposes to shape future growth by directing a major proportion of the anticipated population growth to infill sites, thereby encouraging smart growth by creating walkable, mixed-use districts comprised of retail, higher density residential and local or regional retail uses adjacent to enhanced public transportation.

### **Circulation and Community Mobility Challenges and Opportunities**

The Challenges and Opportunities to achieving Circulation and Mobility Vision for the University Neighborhood include the:

- Limited community knowledge of the potential to use an existing City ordinance, which can eliminate on-street, non-residential parking in residential neighborhoods;



- Inadequate or poorly designed parking in apartments;
- Neighborhood division created by presence of I-215/SR-60 freeway;
- Conflict between the neighborhood's desire to slow traffic, and the need for Citywide arterials to move residents from throughout the City to varied destinations at reasonable speeds and reasonable travel times;
- Emerging, but currently not in place, Bus Rapid Transit system, which will link the University Neighborhood to Downtown, the Marketplace and educational and cultural resources along University Avenue;
- Current lack of local hiking trails that create loops enabling both short and long hikes in the Box Springs Mountains Reserve;
- Existing lack of barriers to prevent off-road vehicles from entering the natural areas at the eastern edges of the University Neighborhood;
- Lack of coordinated planning between the City, UCR and the University Neighborhood regarding the nature of traffic, parking and appearance of Watkins Drive; and
- Plans for a Metrolink regional rail transportation corridor using the existing tracks running parallel to Watkins Drive and community concerns about the possible impacts of a station in the Eastside Neighborhood.

### **Circulation and Community Mobility Objective**

The following Objective was defined based on the Neighborhood Vision and is used to formulate the Policies and Tools:

**CM Objective: Enhance the University Neighborhood's quality of life through solving parking problems, improving all modes of transportation and upgrading hiking trails.**

### **Circulation and Community Mobility Policies and Tools**

The following policies and tools are proposed to achieve the Circulation and Mobility Vision and Objective, and address the Challenges and Opportunities. Figure 5 and 6 illustrate many of these policies and tools.

**CM Policy 1: Eliminate the proliferation of non-resident parking that takes place along Watkins Drive and within existing single-family residential area east of Watkins Drive.**

*CM Tool 1.1: Coordinate with Neighborhood Residents to develop and implement a comprehensive parking plan for the University Neighborhood with an emphasis on Watkins Drive and the single family residential area east of Watkins Drive.*

Residents of the University Neighborhood have been adversely affected by non-residents who take advantage of the ample amount of free parking that is currently available along Watkins Drive and within the existing neighborhood streets of single-family residential area east of Watkins Drive. This condition is exacerbated by students who have rented homes within the Neighborhood and sometimes overload local streets with cars from visitors and extended guests.

The most appropriate response to this problem is to develop and implement a comprehensive parking plan for the area. This plan would address positive and negative effects of various parking solutions including no parking zones, "Resident-only" permit parking zones, and metered parking. A community outreach program would also be established to educate the public about the changes.

As part of the planning process, it is recommended that a "Residents Only" Parking District be established for the area shown in Figure 5. Establishment of this District can be preceded by an informational program to encourage residents to apply for the designation, and accompanied by an area-wide program to install attractive signage defining the District and implement an area-wide enforcement program. Furthermore, the University Neighborhood can consider the merits of establishing this program for the entire area versus continuing to implement it on a block-by-block basis.

Within the "Residents Only" Parking District, a limitation on the number of parking permits provided to each household would be established as an effective way of regulating the number of people that use Neighborhood streets for their long-term parking needs. Parking permits could prevent non-residents and visitors of residents in the Neighborhood from overcrowding local streets.

The parking plan would also consider the prohibition of overnight parking by non-permitted vehicles in the Neighborhood, which may help prevent the proliferation of late-night student parties by forcing individuals to leave the area at a certain hour so that their cars are not ticketed. Overnight parking limitations could also prevent people from using Neighborhood streets for their long-term parking needs.

Free parking along Watkins Drive has hampered the proper functioning of the street, and created additional traffic and circulation problems. One solution to this problem that would be analyzed more closely would be to remove on-street parking from portions of

Watkins Drive north of Valencia Hill, as shown in Figure 5, allowing the street to operate more efficiently for local vehicles and creating other possibilities for the streetscape. Creating metered parking along portions of Watkins Drive in conjunction with a “residents-only” parking district in the adjacent residential area would be an alternative solution that may also eliminate long-term parking.

**CM Policy 2: Establish appropriate long-term traffic and pedestrian treatments for Watkins Drive to best serve the University Neighborhood residents.**

*CM Tool 2.1: Develop a comprehensive multipurpose streetscape enhancement plan for Watkins Drive.*

This streetscape enhancement plan would explore alternative transportation solutions and aesthetic treatments for Watkins Drive, including the possibility of changing the carrier function of Watkins Drive from auto only to a multiple function Parkway serving the University Neighborhood and UCR. This conceptual parkway, as illustrated in Figure 6, could include a Class 1 bikeway north of Linden Street, enhanced pedestrian paths and new trail elements connecting to both the Box Springs Mountains Reserve and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park.

Enhancement opportunities could include:

- Widened sidewalks for enhanced pedestrian circulation;
- Creation of a Class 1 bike path on both sides of Watkins Drive Parkway north of Linden Street by planting a new row of trees within the existing right-of-way;
- Public art and/or other types of neighborhood beautification at major intersections; and
- Local and regional hiking trail connections along a new, linear park that is part of the Parkway.

**CM Policy 3: Enhance all existing modes of transportation within the University Neighborhood, including bicycles, and walking.**

*CM Tool 3.1: Develop an expansion and enhancement plan for the major pedestrian thoroughfares and all Class I and II bikeways and proposed bikeways within the University Neighborhood.*

The University Neighborhood experiences substantial bicycle activity due to the presence of both Neighborhood residents who ride to local schools from local residential areas as well as UCR students who bike to school. Also, residents have expressed a desire for

enhanced bicycle connections to UCR. The Class II Bikeways shown on Figure 5 should be upgraded as described above.

Also, the creation of a Class I Bikeway along Watkins Drive Parkway north of Linden Street would complement the existing and proposed Class II Bikeways identified in the General Plan as shown in Figure 5.

Enhancements to the bikeways could include clear signage, bike racks and storage in appropriate areas, and the elimination of hazards for safe, efficient bicycle movement.

The University Neighborhood also has a high degree of pedestrian activity due to the presence of families with children, senior citizens and students from the University. The overall pedestrian network of the University Neighborhood should be upgraded as shown on Figure 5, including the Enhanced Pedestrian Amenities on the Streetscape Grid, creation of the Watkins Drive Parkway, implementation of the Gage Canal Hiking Trail, and the expansion of trails throughout the Box Springs Mountains Reserve.

**CM Policy 4: Implement and supplement the unique network of hiking trails that can connect the University Neighborhood with local and regional open spaces.**

*CM Tool 4.1: Implement the proposed citywide trails from the General Plan 2025 and consider adding to the citywide trails map local trails that are adjacent to the rail corridor.*

The General Plan 2025 outlines the development of several new City trails that connect the single-family residential sub-areas within the University Neighborhood to the Box Springs Mountains Reserve.

*CM Tool 4.2: Encourage Riverside County to implement the proposed county trails outlined in the General Plan 2025.*

The General Plan 2025 also outlines the development of new County trails that connect the single-family residential sub-areas within the University Neighborhood to the Box Springs Mountains Reserve. The City should work with Riverside County to build these trails, in order to improve access to local open spaces.

*CM Tool 4.3: Explore opportunities for additional, local trail connections to the currently proposed citywide and regional trail networks.*

Residents suggested specific trail locations during one of the community meetings. Efforts should be made to develop these additional trails.

## **CM Policy 5: Enhance public transportation in the University Neighborhood.**

*CM Tool 5.1: Continue to integrate the planning for routes and bus stop connections between the RTA local buses, the proposed RTA Bus Rapid Transit along University Avenue and the Highlander Hauler of UCR.*

The integration of route locations and attention to ease of transferring between the three different systems can enhance public transit convenience for all of the University Neighborhood.

*CM Tool 5.2: Encourage RCTC to maintain an ongoing dialog with University Neighborhood residents, UCR, and the City about potential Metrolink routes and station locations.*

*CM Tool 5.3: Establish a partnership with RCTC to explore benefits and impacts of potential Metrolink routes and stops.*

## **6. THE PUBLIC REALM**

### **What is the Public Realm?**

The Public Realm, as illustrated in Figure 7, is the continuous network of public streetscapes, parks, public facilities and natural open spaces that are interconnected to provide pleasant and meaningful travel corridors, places for community gatherings and activities, areas for quiet contemplation and a framework for the Private Realm's residential and shopping areas.

### **Public Realm and the Neighborhood Vision**

The Neighborhood Vision for the Public Realm reflects both inputs from residents at the community meetings discussed in Section 2 and the policies of the General Plan 2025 summarized in Section 1. Thus the Neighborhood Vision embodies the:

- Preservation of the Neighborhood's unique natural areas for quiet reflection and the maintenance of the special environment of the quiet, single family areas east of Watkins Drive;
- Maintenance and upgrading of the Neighborhood's schools and parks and the addition of a community center including facilities for families and seniors;
- Creation of gathering places for community activities and celebrations;
- Development of attractive travel corridors that provide wayfinding information, connect important public facilities, and enhance the character of the University Neighborhood through distinctive landscaping, lighting, street furniture, public art and graphics; and
- Provision of public art at appropriate locations within the public spaces associated with schools, parks and streetscapes.

### **Relationship to General Plan 2025**

The Urban Design Framework in the General Plan 2025 describes a citywide network of linked public facilities, including educational institutions, parks, open spaces and parkways. New Parkways are defined which are park-like in their design and function as travel corridors making connections between components of Riverside Park – a citywide network of natural and cultivated open spaces. In some instances the Parkways can also incorporate new passive or active park land. The University Neighborhood Plan Urban Design Framework and Public Realm Plan incorporate the citywide elements of the Urban Design Framework and Riverside Park, define or add local open space connections and recommended additions or upgrades to University Neighborhood public facilities.

By implementing a thoughtfully planned and designed Public Realm, the University Neighborhood can increase its quality of life as experienced in recreational areas, reflection areas, gathering areas and travel corridors. Public facilities can also be upgraded in appearance and/or amenities to create appealing destinations, or meeting spaces within the Public Realm.

Public Safety is also an important element of life in the University Neighborhood and in the Public Realm. The Public Safety Element of the General Plan describes the role that Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) can play in assuring a safe environment for the community. The goals of CPTED is to reduce crime by involving the community and designing places that facilitate police surveillance, reduce hiding places and promote defensible space. CPTED approaches the challenge of creating a defensible environment by addressing both the physical and psychological aspects of design.

### **Public Realm Challenges and Opportunities**

The Challenges and Opportunities to achieving the Public Realm Vision for the University Neighborhood include the:

- Unfamiliarity of the Public Realm concept, which views the public environment as interconnected rather than as a series of isolated components;
- Damage being done to natural areas by the encroachment of off-road vehicles and the sometimes poorly designed edges between residential units and the natural open spaces;
- Lack of spaces for community recreation and gathering;
- Lack of an integrated approach to the design of the major streetscapes as automobile traffic carriers, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, public transit corridors and visually attractive, linear open space corridors; and
- Unfamiliarity in the community with the principles and practices of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

### **Public Realm Objective**

The following Objective was defined based on the Neighborhood Vision and is used to formulate the Policies and Tools:

**PR Objective: Enhance the University Neighborhood's quality of life through improvements to school and park sites, upgrading streetscapes and protecting open space and conservation areas.**

## Public Realm Policies and Tools

The major components of the University Neighborhood Public Realm, illustrated in Figure 7, include the:

- Major Streetscapes, which serve the multiple functions of traffic carriers, communicators of wayfinding information, connectors of public and private activities and linear special experiences;
- Watkins Drive Parkway, which will be both a Neighborhood travel corridor and a new linear park;
- Gage Canal/Bikeway/Pedestrian Path, which is part of the citywide trail network defined in the General Plan;
- I-215/SR-60 Freeway Edge, which has potentials for visual enhancements and possibly additional sound control elements;
- Existing and proposed Neighborhood Parks;
- Box Springs Mountain Reserve;
- Public Schools; and
- Gateways to the University Neighborhood and UCR.

### **PR Policy 1: Upgrade or add needed Public Facilities to the Public Realm serving the University Neighborhood.**

The Public Realm should be viewed as a connected network of the University Neighborhood's public elements creating both a pleasant environmental experience and a framework for the preservation, enhancement and development of the Private Realm of residential and commercial areas.

*PR Tool 1.1: Develop and implement a comprehensive park improvement plan that is consistent with the Park Master Plan to preserve, upgrade, or enhance public parks as needed including Highland Park, Islander Park and Mt. Vernon Park.*

*PR Tool 1.2: Preserve the Box Springs Mountains Reserve through access restrictions and prevention of off-road vehicles in the open spaces within and adjacent to the University Neighborhood.*

The continued use of off-road vehicles within existing open spaces such as the Box Springs Mountains Reserve continues to threaten the overall environmental quality in these important wildlife areas. The presence of off-road vehicles within these parks is also



damaging because riders operate their vehicles too close to local neighborhoods, thus creating noise that disturbs residents. Off-road vehicles should be prohibited through law enforcement and the construction of physical barriers to prevent off-road vehicles from entering local parks.

*PR Tool 1.3: Explore the possibility of constructing or establishing the Gage Canal Citywide Bikeway and Hiking Trail.*

*PR Tool 1.4: Upgrade the major streetscapes with appropriate auto and pedestrian lighting and landscaping that both reinforces citywide corridor images where appropriate and reinforces a distinctive image for the University Neighborhood.*

*PR Tool 1.5: Create special public art and wayfinding graphics at primary and secondary gateways to the University Neighborhood and UCR.*

*PR Tool 1.6: Coordinate with University Neighborhood residents to explore a suitable location for a Community/Senior Center.*

*PR Tool 1.7: Encourage the provision of public gathering spaces with all new high density and mixed-use developments.*

*Also see CM Tool 2.2 for enhancement of Watkins Drive.*

**PR Policy 2: The Public Realm should be systematically upgraded over time through a cooperative effort involving the University Neighborhood, the City of Riverside and UCR.**

*PR Tool 2.1: Establish a mechanism to coordinate with the University Neighborhood Association and UCR to discuss and seek comments on land use issues that impact the Neighborhood.*

**PR Policy 3: Utilize law enforcement and other City departments and programs to protect all open spaces and wildlife areas within the Neighborhood from outside impacts, including inappropriate activities and/or illegal activities.**

*PR Tool 3.1: Implement the C.U.R.E. program (Clean Up Riverside's Environment) to stop illegal dumping of trash and other hazardous materials that currently occurs within the Box Springs Mountains Reserve, Islander Park and other conservation areas.*

The Box Springs Mountains Reserve and other local open spaces are being degraded by the illegal dumping of trash and other materials, which contribute to the overall deterioration of sensitive wildlife habitat. This dumping should be prohibited through increased

enforcement, as well as the construction of barriers at selected park entrances to prevent people from dumping trash in the natural open spaces.

*PR Tool 3.2: Organize and support regular litter clean-up events at the public parks and entrances to the Box Springs Mountains Reserve.*

**PR Policy 4: Improve University Neighborhood access to adjacent open space and conservation areas for community enjoyment while maintaining their integrity.**

*PR Tool 4.1: Work with Riverside County to connect regional trails within the Box Springs Mountains Reserve and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park with local trails within the University Neighborhood.*

The Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan was prepared to guide habitat conservation efforts in Western Riverside County. The University Neighborhood and the City and County should protect this important wildlife corridor, as it provides an important habitat connection between the Box Springs Mountains Reserve and the Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park. Carefully considered local trail connections should be made from the University Neighborhood to these areas.

**PR Policy 5: Promote local stewardship through public information and educational programs that relate to the Public Realm in terms of function, aesthetics and public safety.**

*PR Tool 5.1: Develop a program to educate students and residents about the natural and manmade components of the Public Realm, how they may be preserved or enhanced and the value of linkages between components.*

This Information and Education Program could also include the study of Riverside Park as proposed in the General Plan with an emphasis on the components in or adjacent to the University Neighborhood.

*PR Tool 5.2: Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) policies in the design review process for all new development revitalization or rehabilitation projects in the University Neighborhood.*

This design review should pay particular attention to maintaining views to areas located along public rights-of-way, appropriate lighting and the creation of pedestrian activity to reinforce the reality and perception of public safety.

*PR Tool 5.3: Continue and expand the UNET Program including 24/7 round the clock policing and the integration of policing and code enforcement activities.*

The University Neighborhood Enhancement Team (UNET) is a cooperative program between the Riverside Police Department and the UCR Police Department. Each agency has committed policing staff to cooperatively serve a seventeen square mile area that surrounds the University. In addition to responding to calls for service during the early morning hours, officers are encouraged to identify community concerns and seek out practical and innovative approaches to addressing those concerns.

It is recommended that a public safety project focusing on upgrading the existing infrastructure in the Neighborhood be added to the UNET enhancement area. This project would focus on implementing capital improvements projects such as the installation of lighting along busy pedestrian corridors.

*PR Tool 5.4: Explore opportunities to encourage or potentially require property owners to become partners in the City's Crime Free Program.*

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION

### Overview

Amongst the most notable features of the University Neighborhood's Urban Design Structure and Land Use composition is the central presence of the University of California at Riverside from which this Neighborhood takes its name.

New ways of communication, planning and implementation offer potential for improving the relationships between the University Neighborhood and UCR. These potentials related directly to Land Use Objective LU 81 of the General Plan for 2025 that states:

"Allow for the growth and expansion of the University of California, Riverside while ensuring preservation and enhancement of surrounding residential neighborhoods." This Objective is supported by Policy LU 81.1 that states: "Coordinate with UCR and neighborhood groups in joint planning efforts including the joint development and updates of the UCR Long Range Development Plan (LRDP)."

### Creation of a University Neighborhood/City/UCR District and Partnership

To implement the kind of coordinated planning called for in the City's General Plan, a high level of planning and implementation coordination will be required between the City, the University Neighborhood and UCR.

**IP Policy 1: Support a City-University Neighborhood Planning Partnership which would be charged with the responsibility to effectively integrate long and short term planning and implementation plans and projects.**

*IP Tool 1.1: Formalize a Partnership with appropriate representation to be defined through further discussions involving the City, the University Neighborhood and UCR.*

Roles of the Partnership could include:

- Developing an action plan for the continued vitalization of the commercial and retail environment with the University Neighborhood, particularly in existing commercial and mixed-use areas, as shown in Figure 1;
- Identifying potential real estate developers who are interested in investing in the University Neighborhood and working with the University Neighborhood and UCR to upgrade local shopping areas;

- Encouraging developers interested in enhancing the University Neighborhood shopping areas to apply for Village or Urban Village Mixed Use changes to the Zoning Map and utilization of the related provisions of the Riverside Zoning Code; and
- Preparing joint applications for funding of physical projects and community and educational enhancement programs to obtain state, federal, private foundation and corporate funding projects which are supported by the Partnership
- Holding regular (annual or semi-annual) meetings to discuss the Objectives, Policies, and Tools of the University Neighborhood Plan.

*IP Tool 1.2: Encourage UCR to share development and expansion plans with the City and the public during the earliest possible planning stage.*

The residents have expressed frustration with UCR's approach to development and lack of public involvement in land use processes. Involving the public in the early stages of the process allows ample time to digest the proposals for growth and development and also provides an opportunity for feedback.

**IP Policy 2: The City should support UCR created Educational Programs for UCR Students regarding their relationships with the University Neighborhood.**

*IP Tool 2.1: Utilize existing programs, such as the City's website or the "Mayor's Night Out" events, to facilitate the dissemination of information regarding UCR's "Good Neighbor Guidelines."*

## **IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS OVERVIEW FOR THE UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

The following Implementation Tools Table identifies responsibilities, time frames and interrelationships between the implementation tools and policies. The intent is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the University Neighborhood Plan by identifying related tools and policies.